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ABSTRACT

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WOMEN IN MULTICULTURALISM--EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, THERE WE ARE!

Paper presented at the Southern States Speech Communication Association, New Orleans, LA, April 1995.

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WOMEN IN MULTICULTURALISM: EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, THERE WE ARE!

Jacqueline De Hon, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Multiculturalism takes on a broader definition in this intercultural communication paper. All groups which exert influence on an individual's way of thinking are classified as cultures. An overview of intergender communication offers insight into women's history and ways patriarchal forces have shaped gender roles. A discussion of General Semantics principles is applied to intercultural communication as a tool to assist people in learning to understand and respect the Other. Influences of religion/politics, business/workplace, education, and technology control what is available to each gender. It is suggested that a knowledge of general semantics principles and an application of sympathetic-communication may lessen violence perpetrated by one culture upon another.

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WOMEN IN MULTICULTURALISM--EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, THERE WE ARE!

Introduction: Multiculturalism, Women, and Violence

Violence has become a way of life in America. Much of this violence appears to involve persons of differing cultures, which has recently led Congress to pass "hate crime" laws. Although violence against women is epidemic in America, women were not protected under these laws. I suggest that *one way to lessen intercultural violence is to educate people regarding cultural differences so they can move beyond limiting stereotypes and relate to one another as valuable and unique individuals.*

We live in a sexist, racist culture. In order to overcome cultural prejudices that have been taught to us--blatantly and subliminally--since birth we must make a concentrated effort to educate ourselves (De Hon, 1987; De Hon, 1993). We have been taught to be suspicious of anyone who is "different" from us. In fact, we have learned to fear and to dislike the unfamiliar and change--yet we seem to want others to accept us and to like us regardless of our own uniqueness--perceived by the Other as "difference". I suggest that this *cultural double-bind* can be alleviated through communication with an understanding of and an application of General

Semantics principles. I consider successful communication between people in differing cultures very complicated, and I believe that all communication is essentially "intercultural".

Broadening the Definition of Intercultural Communication

My multicultural/intercultural definition includes multiple obvious cultures as well as many less-obvious ones. It reflects the reality of formerly suppressed cultural members' speaking for themselves and in favor of expressions from others who have been similarly suppressed. Just as European ethnographic authority in twentieth-century-social-anthropology has been disempowered by the assertion of many cultural voices' interpreting themselves and others--reversing the European gaze (Clifford, 1988)--so are many cultural voices in today's America shattering the authority of the formerly dominant culture as they define and interpret themselves--reversing the white male gaze. Many researchers have discussed interethnic, interracial, even *intersexual* (my term for communication between cultures with differing sexual orientations: asexual, bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual) divisions and prejudices.

Studies indicate that different groups are more or less acceptable according to the time (era), the geographic area, and the dominant group's

preferences. For example, until 430 B.C. in Athens, male homosexual activity was considered acceptable behavior among wealthy and powerful men (Keuls, 1985); however, in twentieth century America heterosexuality is the dominant culture. At any period, people with differing sexual orientations from the dominant culture exist as "different cultures" and may endure various kinds of persecution. Similarly, ethnic and racial groups have suffered discrimination. Early in the nineteenth century, many Jewish people were treated as marginal in both Europe and America (Myrdal, 1944). They worked hard at jobs no one else wanted but--when they became successful--people reviled them. At different times in American history, people of African-American descent have been treated as non-persons (during slavery) and then as economically and socially marginalized. In addition, Hispanics have traditionally been marginalized in the United States. Native-American-Indians have never held a just position in American society. Currently many people from India, Iran, and the Pacific Rim nations are holding marginal jobs similar to those Jews and Blacks held in the past. And lastly, throughout recorded history in patriarchal societies, *women have been marginalized because of gender*. Their status and economic class were determined by that of their closest male relative. Only recently have women's HERoic efforts eliminated some of these artificial

boundaries--put in place so long ago--so they can move from lower economic ranks on their own merit and through their own efforts.

In addition to these birth-related, caste-like cultures, many exist which we may not have previously considered to be cultures. For example, major and minor religious groups--ranging from zealots who kill and fight wars to force others to follow their particular gods to those who are very private about their beliefs. People from different economic backgrounds/classes also live very different lives and have differing experiences. In addition, regional differences account for some suspicion, and even people within the same geographic region may have differing backgrounds, that is, rural/urban groups which see themselves as different from one another and, indeed, who have different lived-experiences.

In fact, we are each a blend of many cultures inherited through birth or acquired through lived-experiences. It follows, then, that all people are products of multiple cultures--*individually and collectively, we are multicultural*. For example, I am a woman from the southern United States whose life has spanned more than one generation; who is a product of many ethnic and racial genes; who has been involved in various family, social, and religious cultures; who has lived in differing economic class situations, and who has visited and lived in many different locations. Even this fairly-

extensive listing of my cultural categories represents only the tip of the iceberg of sources of subliminal celebrations and/or prejudices. When we realize who we are and the vastness of our own cultural experiences, we become more accepting of differences in others, often to the point of looking forward to learning about lived-experiences of peoples of a variety of cultures--indeed, of *celebrating cultural diversity*!

How does information on various types of cultures and modes of oppression relate to women in multiculturalism and to intercultural communication? How might "sympathetic- communication" aid all groups in understanding one another and in lessening violence against one another? I will elaborate on these points as they relate to one type of intercultural communication from my own research--intergender communication.

Intergender Communication

Where are the women and why?

The majority of people are unaware of women's history--this is a part of our oppression. In order to understand some of the complex mechanisms inherent in women's oppression and to eliminate these artificial boundaries, we must look at women's history to learn how serious-suppression is at work--even today--to keep women from succeeding.

Damaging Ideology

Several institutions are responsible for women's marginalization and oppression. I will briefly discuss four that are the direct result of the political movement which supports the male supremacy ideology--patriarchy: 1) Religion and Politics, 2) Business/Workplace 3) Education, and 4) Technology.

Wilden (1987) calls male supremacy "the struggle for extinction". He sees it as "the most massive system of organized bullying ever to arise on the earth" (inside cover). He believes that "without an end to war the radical and democratic dream of the right to life, liberty, equality, and the pursuit of happiness must ever remain beyond our reach" (p.228). Schaef

(1981) describes two existing systems in patriarchy: The Emerging Female System and The White Male System. She reports that "The White Male System is death-oriented" (preface).

Morgan (1978) suggests that women are a colonized nation, ruthlessly exploited by patriarchy for its own benefit: "Our history, values, and cross cultural culture have been taken from us--a genocidal attempt, manifest most arrestingly in the patriarchy's seizure of our basic and precious 'land'; our own bodies" (p. 161). The fact that women's right to control our own bodies is still a major political/religious dilemma testifies that American women do not yet hold this inalienable basic right.

Dowling (1981) suggests that women in patriarchy are trained for dependency and men are trained for independence. The very traits women need to succeed in the workplace are socialized out of females at a very early age (De Hon, 1987). In a manner similar to Foucault's (1979/1975) description of the prisoner who acts as its own jailer, woman and others are programmed to constantly watch and correct any behavior which does not fit within the artificial boundaries designed by enforcers of the patriarchal ideology. Wilden (1987) believes that the

> "Cinderella Complex" teaches (women) to act inferior and believe it to be true...It is a strategic disability that...ensures that *so long as it remains unrecognized most women will continue to accept and support the*

> *domination of men, and (will) teach male supremacy to their children* as well...(resulting in) the loss to a world society in crisis of most of the diversity and creative capacity of over half the world population" [Italics added](p. 224).

He calls this the "psychological paradigm of every other kind of colonization" (p. 224), suggesting that social relations in which "colonization has forced a caste, class, race, or sex into subservience and...(has) persuaded them that their subordination is 'natural' and 'deserved', because they 'really' are inferior" (p. 86) fit this paradigm. My own research has shown that the mindset that attempts to oppress women is the same as that which tries to oppress minority groups. Fiske (1987) believes that

> "Social relations are understood in terms of social power (which is) always the site of contestation and struggle. Social power is the power to get one's class or group interest served by the social structure as a whole, and social struggle...is the contestation of this power by the subordinate. (Within a culture) *dominant classes attempt to "naturalize" the meanings that serve their interests into the "common sense' of the society as a whole*" [Italics added] (p. 255).

Wilden reports from a 1980 study of "Wife Battering in Canada" that socially-learned maleness precipitates violence; that "there is a new epidemic of violence against women...(and) the source of it is massive male paranoia" (p. 182). He discusses "divide and rule" strategy, reporting Freire's belief that "as an oppressor-minority subordinates and dominates

the majority, it must divide (it) and keep it divided, in order to remain in power" (p. 86).

Religion and politics.

The earliest known religion appears to be worship of The Triple Goddess as the creator of life (Stone, 1976; Daly, 1978; Budapest, 1980; Stephenson, 1981; Eisler, 1987) Over time, in myth, a male descendant of The Triple Goddess, Tiamet, killed her and proclaimed himself the absolute ruler and creator of all (Daly, 1978; De Hon, 1987; Budapest, 1990). With the mythical removal of the female god, the stage was set for a male takeover in religion, politics, and all other areas of life.

One of the most horrendous acts committed by the Catholic Church was a three hundred year reign of terror in which it tortured and murdered millions of innocent women for a nonexistent crime (Daly, 1978; De Hon, 1987). That most people are not even aware of these three centuries of "gendercide" testifies to the efficiency of Patriarchy in hiding its own crimes from the world. Scholars offer many reasons for this holocaust (Gage, 1893; Daly, 1978; BenYhuda, 1980; Heinsahn & Steiger, 1982). The Church was losing converts. Church leadership was extremely greedy and corrupt. The inquisition machinery was still in place, so it had the means

to torture, murder, and confiscate lands and titles. After many wars, there were a large number of elderly widows whom the leadership saw as a drain on church and public coffers. These patriarchs saw no value in women who were past their sexual and servicing prime. In addition, the exploitable population was low. Heinsahn and Steiger (1982) report that peasant families had an average of 2.7 children as they refused to have or raise more than they could support. They controlled family size with the help of women who were healers. These women were called witches, a very positive term at that time and in that society. They believe a political decision was made by church and state leaders to eliminate all who knew anything about birth control and abortion. Exposure of infants was also made illegal and outrageously cruel orphanages sponsored by the state were created--so the rich could have an exploitable labor source. Such a massive, long-term, successful gendercide attempt by a supposedly honorable institution which received no real repercussions is a hard thing for people to forget. I believe it remains lodged in the collective unconscious of the world's population.

Although pioneer American women were full citizens and held every type of wage-earning position at a time when every person's talents and energy were needed, when men wrote the constitution they excluded women from citizenship (Wagner, 1987; De Hon, 1995). In both the French and

American Revolutions women supported and assisted, fighting in every area, assuming freedom and equality would belong to all. They learned after the revolutions were over that men intended freedom and equality for males only. Women were left out when politicians drew up laws for the new nation. It took 144 years of nonviolent political struggle after our nation declared independence from England for women to regain the voteand women have not yet regained full citizenship rights in America (DeHon, 1995).

Business/Workplace: the male takeover of wage-producing work

In patriarchal ideology, the assumption is that wage-producing work belongs to men, while non-paid service jobs belong to women. Wagner (1987) describes how men's laws and customs forced women out of most businesses and professions after the American Revolution. Guilds were created for many specialties, and women were not permitted to join. The Catholic Church's witch massacres effectively forced women out of the healing profession and turned it over to men. Sayers (1973) discusses where some of the so-called "men's jobs" came from, pointing out that men stole wage-producing work women did in the home by moving it to the factory where men could be in control. Thus, as one pundit so colorfully

stated, in the Industrial Revolution, men stepped into the future while women were left in the past.

Education: male domination of education.

In ancient times, Alexander the Great burned the libraries, destroying much of the knowledge of the woman-oriented culture called the matriarchy (Budapest, 1980). In more modern times, although denied access to learning, women were blamed for their ignorance and lack of education. Meanwhile, men created laws of culture and laws of state to benefit themselves (Spender 1980 & 1982; De Hon, 1987).

Denied admittance to universities amid predictions of doom regarding the lowering of scores and standards, women accomplished the reverse. History has shown that, in fact, both enjoyed a dramatic increase.

Technology: male domination of technology.

Technology in a patriarchy is also male-dominated. This is another area in which decision-making men have denied women access to knowledge by commissioning most introductory materials as action-oriented games of

a type which appeals to boys due to their socialization. Spertus (1991) suggests that the powers-that-be mislead females into believing they must be math and engineering experts to become computer scientists when, in fact, communication skills are the primary skill needed.

A couple of years ago, I heard an SCA paper in which the scholar suggested that women had no access to a great source of knowledge made available to men with the invention of the printing press because, denied education, most were unable to read. She further suggested that just as women were "catching up" with men in accessing and creating knowledge through reading and writing, the computer came on the scene. It was her contention that there now exists a similar gender-lag between women and computer technology, another source of knowledge which now appears to be leaving women behind.

Over time, patriarchy developed these complex mechanisms, which continue to operate today, in order to keep women in an unnatural subordinate place. *If this were the natural order of things, force and brutality would not be required to keep women there.* But, as Fiske (1987) has suggested, the oppressed mount constant struggles to free themselves, and the roles of oppressor/ oppressed are never static.

Overcoming Gender Oppression

Today, women continue the struggle against the oppression of the dominant societal group. Women are achieving. We are becoming more prominent in business, politics, and religious endeavors. In overcoming massive, long-term barriers placed in the way, women have shown tremendous courage, strength, and resiliency.

I have long been aware that women and men in most cultures are actually raised in very different "parallel cultures". American females are taught to move in groups, to touch a lot, to tell secrets, and to openly show feelings; while American males are taught to be independent, to never touch each other unless they are causing pain--punching shoulders; tackling in sports--to keep concerns hidden, and to never let people know how they feel. Then, these two very different beings are told to "get married and live happily every after". It's like expecting earthlings to marry aliens (De Hon, 1987)! It takes a lot of caring and understanding to make relationships between people of different cultures work. And I submit that all communication is essentially intercultural communication.

In attempting to create quality cross-cultural communication and to establish satisfying relationships, we must consider actions and behaviors

required by a culture as well as language and meaning differences expected of particular groups according to their gender, generation (child/adult), politics (citizen/leader), religion, residence (rural/urban), region, class/economic status as well as race and ethnic origin. Often people are forced to *create* gender differences where none naturally exist (Brownmiller, 1984). The extent to which we are coerced into "performing" gender differentials was made more real to me through an article I read about an adult female with breasts AND a penis (Garfinkle, 1967). Amazingly complex outward affectations were required of this hermaphrodite as she strove to "prove" to the world and to her doctors that she was "truly a female" with an unwanted appendage.

In a less drastic yet similarly awareness-provoking story, a child tells of her youth and how she preferred women's talk, but later--when she learned that men held all the power in her extended family--she supposed men's talk must be "more important" (Miller, 1986).

I mentioned earlier some behaviors that are required of each gender. Faludi (1991) and Wolf (1991) provide many further requirements and my master's thesis (De Hon, 1987) outlines others. As we can see, culturally-required and coerced behaviors go far beyond what is "natural" for each gender.

Recently, books and articles have been published about gender communication characteristics, notably Tannen's You just don't understand and Gray's Men are from Venus; Women are from Mars. These and other authors have shared their insights on television talk shows. I believe another recent key event in bringing Americans to awareness of some gender differences in perception and understanding was the nationally televised Anita Hill sexual harassment accusation in which a totally male

> Senate Judiciary Committee mercilessly questioned (this conservative female attorney). Clearly these powerful men did not understand women's economic, social, and cultural situation. This...spurred a nationwide discussion. Men began listening to women they knew and trusted. Then they began assisting women in passing and enforcing stricter laws against this crime (De Hon, 1994).

I believe the majority of men do not intend to harm women but, of course, there are bullies who like to harm others. It will take aware men and women to staunch this crime. We need to understand that sexual harassment also exists in places other than the public workforce. I believe it is just one step away from sexual abuse. One co-researcher who shared her life-story during my dissertation research told of a continuous 23-year struggle between her and her spouse over who would control what she does with her time, energy, and attention. So far *she* is maintaining control, but

I wonder if her spouse realizes what-his-behavior-costs-him in respect and what it does to their relationship (De Hon, 1993).

In order to communicate well across-gender-cultures, people must learn to understand each other and to accept the Other's experiences and perceptions as valid. I believe we must attempt to learn and to teach a type of sympathetic-communication in order to enable us to get along well and to cooperate in intercultural communication and understanding.

Appreciating the importance of inclusive-language-use takes sympathetic learning and awareness. To illustrate how very complicated this is, I share this exchange I had last spring with a man who is known in our community as one who is considered to be "liberated". He recently married a feminist friend of mine. He said, "It is amazing what I've learned from Julie! She's opened my eyes to all sorts of things I never knew women experienced!" And then the clincher--he told me, "I've come to the realization that *until we change the language we will not stamp out inequality*!" Laughing ruefully, I said "I've been telling you that...and writing about it for years!" He grinned knowingly and shrugged his shoulders. We both knew that he just never believed this until he heard it from someone he knew intimately and trusted completely. At last his mind had been opened to accept this "new" information. McWherter (1993) suggests:

> Since age-gap couples are, rightly or wrongly, perceived as having some degree of parent/child, mentor/protege overtones, one could theorize that we are more compassionate and more accepting of the other's shortcomings if [positive] associations of a parent figure or a child image exist in the interaction of the relationship. That is, *we may overlook or tolerate interaction that brings to mind the actions of either a much older or a much younger significant person in our life experience* (1993, p. 142).

I believe this information can be projected onto most intercultural experiences and that--just as my recently-married friends were willing to learn from each other--all can open their minds to such experiences and learning.

Where are women today?

Because of these historical events and because of women's emergence into a more fair partnership with men, some people are having difficulty communicating on an equal footing. "Experts" attempt to ease communication by explaining traits they perceive to be common to a specific gender. At least we are attempting to understand and to communicate well with the Other.

For a brief look at women's progress, I will again address the four areas of Religion and Politics, Business/Workplace, Education, and Technology as a guide to "Where women are today".

Religion and politics today.

Women are beginning to take our proper places as leaders in religious and political institutions. Women ministers and religious leaders are making slow, but steady strides toward inclusion. Similarly, in a backlash against corrupt male politicians, voters are beginning to give women a chance to prove ourselves. For example, in 1988, there were 100 men and five women in the Louisiana House of Representatives and 39 men and no women in the Louisiana Senate (De Hon, 1991). Today, the state of Louisiana has eleven women and 94 men in the House of Representatives and two women and 37 men in the Senate (PAR, 1994).

Business/workplace today.

The Labor Department's "Workforce 2000" study predicts that the U.S. workforce will continue to become more female and to have more minority workers as time goes by. AAUW (1991) offers these statistics:

> By 2000, women will comprise 47% of the entire workforce and 66% of new entrants.
>
> Forty-four percent of the U.S. workforce were women, but only 15% of employed scientists and engineers were female.

Although women's numbers in the workforce are increasing, the

same is not true for our wages. Cook (1992) reports:

> Two-thirds of women with IQs of 170 or above are occupied as housewives or office workers.
>
> Two-thirds of employed women earned less than $10,000.00 a year; half were in jobs with no pensions; and 80% occupied menial or semiskilled jobs.
>
> Women who are employed full time still earn only 66 cents to the man's dollar, only a dime better than 1969 figures.

Already, with more women in the paid workforce and in university settings, *the genders are realizing a need to learn how to communicate with one another as equals*. Today women seek full and equal partnership with men in ALL areas and in all situations, from the workplace to the home. Aware men seek the same. Marriage counselors report that key to satisfying long-term, intimate relationships is a fair sharing of duties (Krestan, 1989).

Education Today.

Women are the majority group in America's colleges and universities. Women are going to college in great numbers at nontraditional ages and they are excelling (De Hon, 1993). As this large influx of competent college-educated women enter the workforce, massive positive changes should become commonplace.

Girls in elementary and secondary schools are not experiencing similar success. Reis (1987) suggests that many gifted females fall into underachievement as they enter adolescence, around the sixth grade. Brewer, Mangham, and Delcambre (1995) believe that "The gifted female must wage both personal and societal battles throughout her lifetime. One of the main barriers is cultural and sex stereotyping". Sadker and Sadker (1985) report that "boys dominate the classroom and that teachers reward boys for their domination and reward girls for their passivity". Both female and male teachers tend to discriminate against girls. By the time they start school, girls already know that society thinks boys are more important, and when they enter school things get worse (De Hon, 1987). AAUW's national assessment of self-esteem and academic interest, experience, and aspirations of girls and boys (1991) indicates that 50% of school-aged girls experience loss of self-esteem compared to 20% of boys.

Reis (1987) reports that only 26% of all positions in American higher education are filled by women. Clark (1992) reports:

> Only 1% of college presidents are women.
>
> Thirteen percent of Ph.D.s are earned by women.
>
> Male faculty salaries are 15% higher than those of females with equal rank, tenure, publications, and type of institution.

> Although 70% of classroom teachers are women, they make an average of $3000.00 less per year than male colleagues with similar education and experience.

It appears that females still have a long way to go to reach equality in this area.

Technology Today.

Through the very media that has contributed to their suppression, women are speaking against unfair treatment. I believe that education of the public is essential to overcoming oppression, thus I share a portion of an editorial I wrote on sexual harassment:

> Part of the problem (that fuels sexual harassment) is the difference between women's and men's socialization. I consider successful intergender communication as complicated as (other types of) intercultural communication. We must learn it from each other. The *key to success here* is *willingness to accept another's explanation of individual perceptions*. *We must learn to accept the Other's perceptions and to admit they are as valid as our own* (1993).

I believe it is only when we hear a culture's "truths" and perceptions *from someone we care about and trust* that we begin to *actually believe these truths* and *to make them our own*. Thus, as more women speak out, more men will become allies working for a just equality.

Spertus (1991) examines some of the influences against a woman's pursuing a career in a technical field, particularly in computer science. She

suggests that "Women pursue education and careers in computer science far less frequently than men do. In 1990, only 13% of Ph.D.s in computer science went to women and only 7.8% of computer science professors were female" (abstract). She further suggests that "subconscious behavior...tends to perpetuate the status quo" (abstract). A. M. De Hon (personal communication January 5, 1995) reports that women students at Massachusetts Institute of Technology are succeeding in computer science; however, many MIT women in this field are going to work in different fields where they get less hassle and make more money. It is clear that women have a long way to go before great numbers feel comfortable and remain active in computer fields. Hargroder (1995) lists many possible factors for a gender-gap in computer usage. She feels this gap may be widening, resulting in females' being at an increasing disadvantage in math and science achievement in the future. She suggests that "a strong relationship will occur between computer literacy/proficiency and job attainment. This increases the importance of equity issues in vocational preparation" (p. 5).

Introduction to General Semantics Principles

Thus, we become aware that all people (even identical twins) are different. I offer this stroll through General Semantics as an aid in navigating some of the communication-barriers in an ever-changing world with continuously-changing people. I believe that if we apply General Semantics principles to our interpersonal dealings with one another, people from various cultures may learn to respect one another, to get along, and to live near one another in relative peace. We can gain understanding of the Intercultural Other through sympathetic- communication and dissipate violence through application of general semantics principles.

Understanding General Semantics Principles

I offer a broad gloss of Johnson's (1946) descriptions of general semantics principles:

Non-Identity: A is not A--the word is not the thing; you can never step in the same river twice.
As no two things are alike, differing levels of abstractions, concrete descriptions, and "facts" cannot be discussed as though they were the same.

Non-Allness: A is not all of A--the map is not all of the territory.
We can never say all about anything. A symbol is an abstract. A signal is direct action without thought, that is, stereotyping. Looking

at a picture (symbol) of snakes and dropping it in fear is experiencing a signal-reaction.

Self-Reflexiveness: Abstracting is self-reflexive: we use language to talk about language.

Application of General Semantics

I offer this general application formula, and I encourage others to build upon it in the interest of better intercultural communication and relations:

Non-Identity: Cultural stereotypes (high level abstracts) of families, genders, generations, regions, religious groups, racial/ethnic groups, and so forth, cannot be discussed on the same level as interpersonal experiences (lower level abstracts) with individuals who embody varying multicultural backgrounds. There exist no really-real (concrete) "facts" about anyone or anything.

Non-Allness: We must teach ourselves to grow beyond signal-reactions (stereotyping) and into thoughtful response to what we actually experience (reality) with each individual rather than what we have absorbed or have been taught a group "stands for" (abstract symbol).

Self-Reflexiveness: Only in being self-reflexive--discussing with ourselves (intrapersonal communication) and with others (interpersonal communication) perceptions and realities we have experienced--can we come to an understanding and an acceptance of one another.

Conclusion: Sympathetic-Communication

I suggest that, since the world and the people in it are constantly changing, we might as well work toward changing for the better--toward becoming more inclusive. We can teach ourselves to become accepting of others. In doing this, we create space for changes in ourselves and in others without condemnation. We can celebrate growth in partners, friends, and strangers. We can leave limiting dichotomous (either/or) thinking behind and teach ourselves to think on a continuum, allowing space for differences and compromises.

I have broadened the definition of intercultural communication and have briefly discussed several cultures--concentrating on the culture of gender and the place men have forced women to hold--with the idea that *through the use of general semantics principles we can learn and teach peaceful, respectful co-existence among all cultures.*

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